

Idaho Trade Token Newsletter

Boise, Idaho

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News

Once again, our ranks have been reduced by the death of a comrade. Jim Hemphill died on November 4 of a massive heart attack. The Portland **Oregonian** of November 7 printed this.

James Donovan Hemphill was born Jan. 9, 1928, in York, Neb. He served in the U. S. Navy in World War II and in the U. S. Air Force during the Korean War. He moved to Portland in 1964 and was an accountant and administrator for several companies, retiring from Willamette Valley Motor Freight in 1992. He was the author of "Oregon Trade Tokens," a book and catalogue of turn-of-the-century trade tokens. In 1954, he married Barbara Voelker. Survivors include his wife, one daughter, one son, one grandchild, and one brother.

Kendall Ballard wrote, "The [Verborg] Bridge story was most exciting. I remember the old wooden bridge. The swimming hole where I took swimming lessons was just south of the bridge on the east side of the river. There was a little store on the northeast corner of the bridge. We would walk from home over there to buy fireworks."

Lynn Langdon's collection was sold to Glen Higley and then to Dan Lute in November. I have heard that the token dies Lynn had went to a person in Montana who will auction them. Keep a watchful eye out for fake tokens surfacing onto the market.

Boise Bans Hinkeys

This headline spotted in the Idaho Falls newspaper sent me looking for the story in Boise's **Evening Capital News**. On August 28, 1920 was this story.

CARD PLAYING FOR HINKEYS ORDERED STOPPED IN CITY

Proprietors of pool and billiard rooms were notified Friday night by the police department acting under orders of Mayor Eagleton that all card playing for hinkeys must be stopped. According to the city officials it has been of common report around the city that there was gambling going on at card games. It was for the purpose of quieting these rumors and also to live up to a rigid interpretation of the law, according to the officials, that the action was taken.

When seen this morning Mayor Eagleson stated that it was felt that playing for hinkeys was in effect gambling and that he had issued orders to the police department to quietly inform the proprietors of pool and billiard rooms and other amusement places of the sort that such card playing must stop. It was held by the authorities that hinkeys were articles of value and that their use in card games was against the law.

Chief of police Charles Irwin stated that he had received the orders from the mayor and had done his best to enforce them to the letter. He said that the members of the force were given instructions Friday night in regard to the enforcement of the orders and had carried them out.

Why this move was taken was told in the **Sunday Capital News** of August 29, 1920.
STATEMENT ISSUED ON CARD PLAYING

Mayor Eagleson Saturday afternoon issued a statement in regard to the stopping all card playing for hinkeys in Boise. He said that his order to the police does not prohibit card playing for amusement anywhere but does put a stop to using hinkeys to represent bets or winnings in the games. The statement follows:

'While in attendance at the recent Pocatello convention, I was occasionally joshed about Boise being a sort of 'wide open gambling town'. On inquiry I generally found that this view of Boise's gambling activities was based on public card playing for 'hinkeys' in cigar stores and pool rooms. Although no large winnings or losings can be had in the course of a sitting, yet card playing for hinkeys is a real form of gambling even though the hinkey as a token represents but a nominal trade value, usually five cents.

'Feeling that such gaming was contrary to law and was not improving Boise's outside reputation, the local reputation of the players or the houses where such gaming occurs, I decided to stop all games for hinkeys or anything else of value in all public places. My order to the police does not prohibit card playing for amusement anywhere nor interfere in any other manner with any man's business.'

Hinkeys

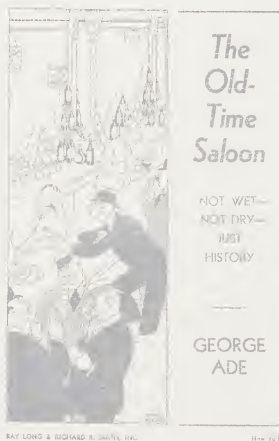
At least in southern Idaho, tokens were often called "hinkeys". I've always felt that this word is somehow related to the Hickey Brothers chain of cigar stores in the Midwest. Perhaps the tokens used there were known as "Hinkeys", but since that term had another connotation, it was modified somewhat for our use. I once wrote the Merriam-Webster dictionary people asking for the history of the word, but they had never heard of it. Is "hinkey" only a local term? There are any number of other familiar terms for the tokens we collect (slugs, checks, chits, etc.), but I have never encountered "hinkey" far outside of Idaho. Has anyone else?

Fun Book

Kendall Ballard loaned me an interesting old book he had. It is written by George Ade, a Chicago newspaperman, and gives a fascinating insight on saloons. His major premise was that the liquor trade brought on its own downfall (prohibition) by flaunting the rules society was using to govern the excesses of the saloons.

I see that this book was immediately sold out when it was first published in 1931. It was reprinted in 1993 by Old Town Books in New York City, so it is readily available through the used book market.

On a somewhat related note, Dan Lute just gave me a copy of the November 5, 1998 **Boise Weekly** magazine, a freebie around here. In it was a nice piece by Anna Webb about Levy's Alley, Boise's early saloon and red light district located between Main and Idaho Streets from 6th to 7th Streets.



A New Nampa Attribution

A few more hours spent in the vault of the Canyon County Recorder's office in Caldwell recently paid off in the attribution of a maverick I have owned for many years. This piece is 21mm brass.



In 1936, Canyon County Beer License Number 80 was issued to Powell & Hamilton, Elmer Powell and L. H. Hamilton, doing business as the Blue Ribbon at 1310 Main Street in Nampa. 1937 license number 24 was issued to the same business. In 1938, license 26 was issued to L. H. Hamilton alone for the Blue Ribbon at 1314 Main Street. I found no further license in 1939.

This is one of those maverick attributions which is subject to further research. In that it was "found" in the Nampa area and I have seen others locally, it may be from the business licensed in 1938. The name is relatively common, so it could as easily be attributable other places. But, for now, it will be Nampa #N-71. If others of you have examples or varieties of this piece, please let me know.

New Variety

One thing I like about mavericks is that they keep one on one's toes. I recently obtained a Tetonia maverick which I assumed to be the same as #TETA-4. When I finally got around to cataloguing it, I see that it is a "new" variety. Now there are four from this 1914 pool hall:



TETA-4 JOHN M. / SWISHER // GOOD FOR / 5¢ / IN TRADE 21mm Rd Br (1 known)
TETA-4[A] J. M. SWI. // GOOD FOR 5¢ IN TRADE 21mm Rd [ch] Br (2 known)
TETA-4[B] J. M. SWI. // GOOD FOR / 5¢ / IN TRADE 25mm Rd Br (5 known)
TETA-4[C] JOHN M. SWISHER // GOOD FOR / 5¢ / IN TRADE 21mm Br Rd (1 known)

These tokens have always made me wonder why the maker abbreviated Swisher's name to Swi. There appears to me plenty of room on the token to spell it out. That, the fact that I have found reference to this business only in 1914, and the large number of 5¢ varieties, makes me wonder whether Swisher perhaps had his tokens made as mavericks so he could use them elsewhere. Has anyone seen a reference to him elsewhere?

Brunt's Cash Grocery

Dean Rasmussen came through with the answer for the suspect maverick in the October issue. Dean followed the advertising in the **Idaho Falls Register** for Brunt's Cash Grocery until he found an ad (April 14, 1911) with the slogan matching the one on the maverick token I have. Dean also came up with a newspaper advertisement showing a front view of the business a few years later. I will use it in a future issue when I can get a better copy.



The full story on Brunt has yet to be researched. George Brunt was born September 25, 1875, in England (according to the 1910 Census), or in Bonneville County (according to his Draft registration). The first directory listing I have found is in 1903 when he and Henry Catmull were partners in a grocery business in Idaho Falls. The Brunt name was prominent in the Idaho Falls



grocery business until the mid 1920s when Arthur C. "Art" Pearson was listed as head of the Brunt Cash Grocery at 361 "A" Street. There are three tokens known from Brunt's, each a different variety.

IDF-58 BRUNT'S CASH GROCERY / THE / STORE
THAT / SAVES / YOU MONEY / GROCERIES /
IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO // GOOD FOR / 5 / IN /
MERCHANDISE 19mm Oc Al

IDF-58(A) Same except 10¢ 23mm Oc Al

IDF-58(B) WHERE THE \$ DOES ITS DUTY / GROCERIES / BRUNTS / CASH / 4 4 / 1912
// GOOD FOR / 5 / IN MERCHANDISE 21mm Rd Br

Probably there are other denominations out there waiting to be "discovered". Which of the varieties came first is still unknown, but it seems certain that Brunt liked slogans. That is not unusual for token-issuing businesses. It may seem odd to us for Brunt to have used up a lot of space on the token for his slogan instead of letting us know that the piece was from Idaho Falls, Idaho. It probably made good sense to him, since he knew very well where he was located, as did all his customers who used the tokens. And, why would the piece be dated? A further mystery on the (B) variety are the two 4s in the legend. They could be just ornaments, although they appear to have a purpose.

A Tentative Boise Attribution

This piece and its 5¢ partner have baffled area collectors for years. It is the product of the Salt Lake Stamp Company as evidenced by the ornaments above and below the name. These are used on many tokens from that maker, and I have never seen them from any other token makers.



This attribution is one of those which may never be proven beyond a doubt, but based on the fact that numerous of these tokens have been found in the Boise area, the following is a fairly logical choice of businesses to attribute them to. Admittedly the Polk's Boise City Directories and one newspaper obituary are the only sources I have tapped, but this is "work in progress".

Alvin Bailey was the proprietor of the National Quick Lunch & Coffee House at 112 North 10th Street in the 1911-13 period. Jacob Gebbs [Geb] worked for Bailey from 1912 to about 1914 when he apparently bought out Bailey. From 1915 to about 1919, Jacob H. Geb is shown as owner of the Boise Waffle Cafe at 104 South 10th Street. In the early 1920s the name is shown as Geb's Waffle Cafe & Lunch Room. In 1925 they advertised, "We feed the Multitude. The best regular dinner in the City for 35 cents. Main SE Corner 10th." From 1927 to 1935 the name was listed as Geb's Cafe at 925 Main Street. In 1936 Geb's brother in law, Frank J. Willy took over operation for a few years before moving into the service station business.

The **Idaho Statesman** reported the death of Beatrice A. Geb who died on January 18, 1951 in Reno, NV. "She and her husband operated restaurants in Montana and Idaho until 1935 when they moved to Reno." The obituary of Jacob H. Geb appeared in the **Statesman** of October 23, 1955. "He was born in Wisconsin August 10, 1872 and operated several cafes in Boise from 1914-1930 [1936?] when he moved to Sparks, NV. He lived there for 10 years before returning to Boise."

Another Boise Attribution

This must be the issue for mavericks! I have owned this piece for several years, having gotten it in a group of tokens from south-western Idaho. It is listed in Erickson's

Washington State Trade Tokens as being from Othello, WA, however I have written

several of the Washington collectors

requesting some reference to this attribution, but none have provided any. It may well have

been used there, but I am certain that the issuer was a saloon-keeper in Boise and that the token was used here. Once again, this piece illustrates the pitfalls of maverick attributions and token research in general. This guy's name was spelled in several different ways on supposedly official records; it probably was pronounced variously as well. I believe the correct spelling of the name is Truesdall.



The token will be listed as #BO-182. It is a 25mm round aluminum piece.

The first reference I found to Orous B. Truesdale was as I was examining the archives of John Jedlick's Boise Cigar Factory. As he traveled the area taking orders for cigars, he kept a day book of the pool halls, saloons, and cigar stores he visited. Jedlick was quite fluent in English, but his spelling was often phonetic. In November, 1902, he has an entry for "O. B. Truesdahl", in January, 1903 the entry was for "O. B. Truesdahl", and in March, 1905 it was "Bud Truesdale".

The Boise Polk's directories show O. B. Truesdall as proprietor of the Anheuser-Busch Saloon at 716 W. Main Street from 1901 to 1903. In 1904, Truesdall and James Hensing are shown as partners in the California Wine House at 108 N. 9th Street.. In 1905 Orous B. Truesdall is listed as owning a saloon at 816 W. Main Street. He is listed from 1906 through 1908 as a resident only; he evidently moved to Oregon or Washington after 1908.

Truesdall was born on September 27, 1862 at Island City, Oregon, married Maggie Munden on December 15, 1883 at Baker City, later married Mabel Wesley on April 29, 1903 at Boise. He died at LaGrande, Oregon on December 2, 1936.

"Central Has It"

Several years ago John Gold got a number of mavericks from the Central Drug Company in Idaho Falls. They appear to have come from the Utah "outhouse hoard" as most are corroded. There are two varieties, both 21mm brass. The slogan, "The Central Has It," is the attributing factor; the newspaper ad from the **Idaho Register** of Idaho Falls for April 11, 1911 carries the same slogan.



IDF-56: CENTRAL DRUG CO. / 5¢ / IN TRADE // THE / CENTRAL / HAS IT (6 known to me)

IDF-56(A): CENTRAL DRUG CO. / 12½¢ / IN TRADE // THE / CENTRAL / HAS IT (3 known to me)

Subscriptions

This issue completes two years of the **Idaho Trade Token Newsletter**. My intent in putting it out has been to foster good fellowship and communication among the Idaho collectors and to encourage sharing of "new" finds, research, news, and rarity information to make the Idaho catalog more accurate. So far, I think the objectives have been met. If your name appears on the following list, you have my thanks for helping with these goals; your free subscription will continue. Ballard, Berg, Curtis, Dunn, Fritz, Haberman, Higdem, Hoskins, Idaho Historical Society, Libert, Lute, Mabry, Magnuson, Manos, Powell, Rasmussen, Waters.

I will send a few issues to people who contact me or are recommended by you readers, but if I don't see any activity from their direction, they will be dropped in a few months. This will be the last issue for several people in that category. A paid subscription at \$20 per year (and \$2 each for back issues) to cover printing and postage will continue to be offered. Administering this is not my "cuppa tea", so it will be on an annual basis, starting with the January, 1999 issue. I would prefer an article about Idaho tokens over the money, though.

Happy Holidays to all! May 1999 bring lots of interesting new tokens to your collections. Don't forget to mark your new calendar for our gathering in Wallace on the July 24 weekend!

Best regards,

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